



**PARTNERSHIP
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CHILDREN**

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**Public Comment of Deborah Stein, J.D., Network Director of the Partnership for America's Children to
the Census Scientific Advisory Committee Meeting, September 23-24, 2021**

Submitted by email to shana.j.banks@census.gov

My name is Debbie Stein. I am commenting on behalf of the Partnership for America's Children. We help lead the Count All Kids Coalition, which worked to improve the count of young children in the 2020 Decennial Census. The Partnership has the following concerns we would like to share with the CSAC and the Census Bureau.

First, we thank the Bureau for accepting the March 2021 CSAC recommendation to establish a task force that will focus on data for young children across varied Census Bureau programs. We look forward to working with the task force, and request that a member of the task force be designated as a liaison with the children's community so that we can support their work.

Second, we strongly encourage the Bureau to develop more robust evaluations of the 2020 efforts to improve the count of young children. To ensure that this happens we encourage the Bureau to develop a team to oversee 2020 evaluations and 2030 Census research related to young children. Given the high net undercount of young children in the 2010 Census, and early evidence of a high net undercount of Hispanic children in 2020, it is critical to understand which efforts undertaken in the 2020 Census improved the quality of the data for young children and which did not work. In the Census Bureau's response to CSAC March 2021 recommendations, page 10, they accept the recommendation to understand lessons learned in the 2020 Census so they can apply them to future data collection efforts including the 2030 Census. This will require robust evaluations. However, despite inquiries by my colleague Dr. O'Hare, and despite the request to include such evaluations in an April webinar that we hosted for the Census Bureau to our network, as far as we can tell there are no plans to evaluate any of the new efforts in the 2020 Census to get a better count of young children.

Third, we ask the Census Bureau to quickly update all the studies they did between 2016 and 2019 on the undercount of young children. While they are not evaluations per se, they contribute to our understanding of the issue. Many of the studies came out too late to be used in 2020 Census planning, so updating them now would greatly aid in 2030 planning.

Fourth, we ask the Bureau to assess the effectiveness of administrative data in counting young children. We are deeply concerned that nearly 5% of all 2020 census responses were based on administrative data "when a household respondent cannot be reached", which according to some reports meant only one effort to reach the household. The administrative data that was then used we believe included tax data, which meant that it could not include babies born in 2020; in addition, many doubled up households were at risk of being missed since doubled up households frequently include at least one very low income family that is not required to file taxes. Households with young children are particularly likely to live in very low income families. Consequently, we urge the Bureau to assess whether administrative data captures data on young children adequately and to consider using it in the 2030 census only after full efforts (i.e. multiple visits) to reach household members repeatedly have failed.



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Fifth, given the significant undercount of young children, we urge that the child advocacy community be included in the list of stakeholders to be consulted on the Demographic and Housing Characteristics file (DHC) and detailed Demographic and Housing Characteristics file (D-DHS).

Finally, we commend the Bureau's decision to share its progress on the blended base Population Estimates program and we encourage the Bureau to reach out to a wide range of experts and stakeholders including the children's community through such options as open-invite webinars to get their input.

Please feel free to reach out to me at dstein@foramericaschildren.org with any questions.

Sincerely yours,

Deborah Stein, Network Director